

Results of the Midcareerist Obstacles  
Exercise

The class was divided into six five-man teams for this exercise. The initial task was to identify and formulate those problems that needed consideration. After re-grouping the class, they undertook the second task which was to attempt to arrive at solutions to problems or answers to questions. The questions and answers follow:

Question: Is the reduction in quality of the Agency's production an acceptable by-product of preoccupation with management practices, and specifically, ongoing personnel cutbacks?

Answer: (where applicable) Obviously not, but it is almost inevitable that Agency production will continue to suffer unless the existing nervousness about personnel matters diminishes. Confusion about the Agency's hiring and firing practices often makes no sense to the rank-and-file who do the work, and these people are concerned that Agency managers are overly sensitive to personnel trends formulated by people outside CIA who have little understanding of what the Agency does and what its special problems are.

Questions (three): Has MBO made us more preoccupied with the procedure than with actual intelligence accomplishments? Will it survive high-level changes in Agency leadership? "Management by Objective" concept looks good, but when will it be implemented? No one apparently understands the concepts and how it is to be implemented. (Example: LOI).

Commentary and answers: Bureaucracy increasing in CIA to the detriment of production:

- a. Current requirements to write so much admin material that the real jobs (production) get less and less time and attention.
- b. MBO--
  1. Is it necessary at all?
  2. If so, is it necessarily the best model for CIA personnel administration?

MBO is a good idea in principle--everyone accomplishing his given objectives. Essentially, it may be a procedure better applied to quantities rather than intelligence, thus is relatively less or more important, depending upon which Agency office is involved. To date, no one appears to understand how it can be applied Agency-wide. Experts forecast that it may require four to eight years for effective implementation. Thus, questions which can only be answered in the future are:

1. Is it worth the managerial time necessary for implementation?
2. Will this difficult implementation process survive high-level changes in the Agency and in the U.S. Government?

Question: What is the future of CIA overseas?

Answer: We will not expand, but rather will become less obvious and rely largely on the non-official cover approach (and remote technical collection).

Question: Do Clandestine Operations belong in the CIA?

Answer: Assuming you mean Black Operations, Clandestine Operations belong in CIA. They are part of our charter and thus are controlled by CIA, who, in turn, is controlled by Congress and the U.S. Government. Up to now, this system works. The Intelligence Community levies requirements, and thus far the Clandestine Service has responded to the requirements. CIA is the focal point for requirements and is the one to be fed these requirements. We believe an independent Clandestine Service which lacked the present controls would not be as responsive to requirements and just possibly would be counter-productive! Removal of the DDO from the CIA would result in the DDO's incorporation into another member of the Intelligence Community, or creation of an independent DDO. Neither of these alternatives is satisfactory. No other member of the Intelligence Community could serve the purpose better than the CIA. As an independent organization, the DD O would tend to function with less direction and less adherence to requirements levied by the CIA.

Question: Redirection of collection requirements within the Agency causes severe strain on the Clandestine Service in collection methods and manner in which the public is tuned morally to accept. Watergate has had an effect on the public view of clandestine collection. In the future, will the U.S. Government, or in effect the Administration, be willing to insulate and defend the basic necessity for a clandestine service?

Answer:

1. The Agency must convince the current existing administration of the critical need to continue to penetrate foreign intelligence communities in order to collect and assess that information that a given government feels sensitive enough to try to deny to the U.S.
2. Refine the collection requirements for the Clandestine Service. A definitive assessment should be made of those requirements that can only be satisfied by clandestine means, and these should then be emphasized.
3. The Agency should have a more forthright public relations posture that stresses the Agency's mission in response to U.S. foreign policy objectives.

Question: Is there an alternative to the present requirements generation system, and is MBO effective?

Answers: We believe paragraph 1, in answer to the future of the DDO (see above), addresses this question in part. Also, because the existence of the Intelligence Community is based in great part on requirements, a course for Agency employees on how requirements are generated, processed, and distributed, may be valuable. (continued) -2-

Answers (continued): We feel that during each individual's career, requirements constitute a vast segment of his raison d'etre. Yet many of us are unfamiliar with the overall system and how it works.

Regarding MBO: We, as a group, do not feel it has been in effect long enough to definitively say whether it has been effective.

Statement: Concerning morale--prestige within the community is considerably less than in the past. It has been affected by the lack of direction from the White House, or from the omnipresent Dr. K. (at least, substantive direction). It has also been affected by press and other sources that indicate that the DCI does not have the influence within the Administration that past Directors had.

Response: No written response to this statement was produced by the class.

Question: Can CIA remain an effective organization, given the competition among intelligence agencies and the unfavorable press coverage of our activities?

Answer:

1. At this time there is relatively little effective competition to what we do.
2. Press coverage is fairly good these days.

Question: How can the Agency morale be lifted during this time of change and turmoil?

Answer: We do not believe there is a real morale problem. However, to lift morale, we would like the following:

1. More feedback on our output.
2. Within the organization, more mobility from job to job.
3. More meaningful career planning.

Question: How can the Agency better evaluate its products? Product evaluation does not seem to filter down to the analyst level, if it exists at all.

Answer: The ultimate evaluation of an intelligence product is the consumer. In effect, this evaluation can determine whether a product is good or poor. All too often, however, we are told that the consumer is satisfied and only more of the same is required. This was by and large the situation that existed until Helm's departure from the Agency. Subsequently, however, we were told that the Agency's product was not as good as we had been expected to believe, and that major changes were required.

The producers, i.e., the people who actually do the work, are confused about the present situation, and are not so certain that what they produce is wanted or is actually better than what they produced before.

More attention should be given to the evaluation of the product by the producer himself. He knows the flaws and weaknesses (continued)

Answer (continued): of his product probably better than anyone else. What he lacks is more direct contact with the user of his product so that he can get direct feedback, rather than the infrequent indirect comments he receives now.

Question: Would it be possible for the Agency to establish a coordinating body to insure utilization of available resources?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Is compartmentation counter-productive?

Answer: Often. The trend now is toward de-compartmentation.

Question: Better communication is needed to inform employees of the direction, policy, and trends of the Agency. How can this be done to reach employees at all levels?

Answer: Staff meeting minutes should be posted for all personnel to see. This would be on the Office and Division level. When necessary to notify employees of major changes, briefings could be held in the Auditorium on the Office level.

Statement: Encourage better management-employee communications in order to

- (a) Let management know what the employees are thinking.
- (b) Let employees know policy decisions on a more timely and factual basis.
- (c) Keep overseas people informed.

Response: Great!

Question: How can the Agency's training program be improved?

Answer: Content presentation--content and presentation are equally important. Good information which is poorly packaged doesn't come across. Instructors who concentrate on presentation as well as content do a much better job of communicating than those who rely on content alone. There should be constant periodic review and reappraisal of curricula and course content. Flexibility should be maintained in courses offered.

Question: Is Central Cover Staff responsive to Agency requirements?

Answer: No; CCS pedestrian attitude toward the overall cover problem is not "in tune" with Agency requirements. CCS is a prime example of an organization in need of a "shot in the arm."

Question: What influence will the Marchetti case have on the Agency?

Answer: The contents of the Marchetti book are not yet available, therefore, final judgement of its effects cannot be made. In general, the case appears to establish a dangerous precedent that might encourage others to emulate his action without fear of punishment. However, the book may also prompt correction of weaknesses in the Agency.

ADMINISTRATIVE - INTERNAL USE ONLY

Question: Does DDO contract employment have an adverse impact on staff employees with respect to opportunities for: (a) retainability? and (b) promotion?

Answer: This is not seen as a problem per se; however, management must be aware of potential problems which may develop at the time of contract termination, i.e., transition to staff employee status.

Statement: Regarding headroom problems within the Agency--the structure appears to be conical at the top with a bulge in the center (grade wise: 12-14). The problem was compounded in the mid-sixties by an influx of CT's, direct hires, and by Vietnam.

Response: We don't believe the structure is conical. We feel that retirements and resignations will help alleviate the problem. There is no real solution.

Question: Do people stereotype Offices and Directorates?

Answer: Yes, they do. Some Offices suffer an image problem within the Agency. In many instances it is due to a lack of knowledge. We need more interaction between Offices and Directorates thru training courses, rotational tours, orientation programs, and we recommend that the timing of the IWA course be changed; it would perhaps be more meaningful after one year's service.

Question: Should we encourage rotation between Directorates, and how? What is the value of rotational assignments?

Answer: Rotational assignments should, in general, be encouraged. However, it is essential that management carefully evaluate these assignments to ensure that each such assignment truly contributes to the employee's overall growth.

Statement: Lack of opportunities for lateral movement without prejudice. Job hunting automatically places a stigma on the person seeking a change for whatever reasons.

Response: Career counseling may help.

Question: How can the individual employee exert greater influence over his own career development?

Answer: Career counseling, triggered by first-line management. The individual must follow through.

Question: What does Agency career service offer today, given the present preoccupation with streamlining the personnel cutbacks?

Answer: Not much--job security is dependent upon performance.

Question: How much continuity is needed in middle-level and working-level management?

Answer: This question was not answered by the class.

ADMINISTRATIVE - INTERNAL USE ONLY

Question: How can the Agency do a better job about informing people who are in the possible "RIF" category? In particular, people who think they are in a satisfactory status, but actually are not, should be the topic of this question.

Answer: Individual employees of an office should be advised of their (a) ranking within grade, and (b) ranking with regard to promotional status. There should be early identification of personnel in the lower five percent who do not have the capability or initiative to give the Agency a sustained good performance. This will alleviate the problem of terminating an employee after many years of marginal service.

Question: What is the value of bringing in senior-level management personnel from industry or private business?

Answer: In this regard, all possible Agency sources should be exhausted before reverting to outside recruitment at the senior management level.

Question: The DDS&T has supergrade non-managerial specialists. Does this situation exist in other Directorates, particularly the DDO?

Answer: No; but it should be possible to implement an incentive system which will provide comparable rewards for non-technical intelligence specialists ("case officers").

Question: Would it be possible to develop career patterns along substantive lines?

Answer: Thru GS-14/15, OK--supergrades must be flexible.

Statement: Regarding career development, stressing preparation for management positions--the Agency historically has filtered analysts, case officers, etc. into supervisory positions without preparation or training in supervision of personnel. Courses such as the Federal Executive Institute, and the Harvard Institute are for a select few. In the case of the FEI, it is for super-grades who have been in supervisory positions for years.

Individuals are thrust into management who have not expressed a desire to be a supervisor. Thus, there is a problem of selection for management, and of career development for non-managers.

Response: These problems seem to be related to the question of an individual's possibilities for advancement without becoming a manager. We felt that it has been necessary to become a manager in order to advance. There should be, however, a limited capacity in the structure to permit some high grade substantive positions outside of a supervisory role, e.g., up to GS-14 or GS-15 positions, depending upon the component.

In order to help employees with their career development, a system similar to the OWI "career enhancement forms" should be considered in other components. This allows or encourages all employees to consider their career annually at one, five- and ten-year future dates. Requests for training and training needs can be identified at this time. Identification of future  
(continued)

ADMINISTRATIVE - INTERNAL USE ONLY

Response (continued): managers should begin early and these forms may help.

The role of the career status employee has changed and no longer has much meaning. The new ranking-by-grade system is taking over and has yet to be tested.